

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, and 6-8 have been canceled. Claims 5, 9, and 11 and amended claims 2, 4, and 11 are in this application.

Claims 2, 4, 5, and 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. In explaining this 112 rejection, the Examiner appears to base the 112 rejection on the phrase "by the molding process" which appears in claims 4 and 11.

Independent claim 4 (from which claims 2, 5, 9, and 10 depend) and independent claim 11 have been amended herein so as to delete the phrase "by the molding process." As such, it is respectfully requested that this 112 rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 2, 4, 5, and 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,344,729 to Akins et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,254,184 to Tsukagoshi.

Amended independent claim 4 recites the following:

"A method for decorating a surface of a die usable a plurality of times so as to form a plurality of three-dimensional objects by a molding process, said method comprising the steps of:

coating the surface of the die with a photoresist;

molding a photomask into a same shape as a shape of said die which corresponds to a shape of the three-dimensional object;

sticking the photomask molded into said shape to said die coated with the photoresist; and

causing a pattern formed on said photomask to be formed onto said die,

in which the die is usable to form the three-dimensional object with the pattern formed thereon,

wherein said pattern is formed on a surface of the photomask uniformly." (Emphasis added.)

Accordingly, claim 4 of the present application is directed to a method for decorating a surface of a die usable a plurality of times so as to form a plurality of three-dimensional objects by a molding process which comprises steps of coating, molding, sticking and causing.

Initially, it is respectfully submitted that neither Akins nor Tsukagoshi appears to disclose the method specifically recited in claim 4 as herein below described.

Akins appears to be directed to a method for fabricating a reusable photomask which may be used in making a radome or three-dimensional printed circuit board. (See, for example, lines 7-11 of column 1 and lines 3-5 of column 2 of Akins.) As such, it is respectfully submitted that Akins does not appear to disclose a method "for decorating a surface of a die usable a plurality of times" as in claim 4.

Tsukagoshi appears to be directed to a method for making a vibrating member such as a diaphragm of a loudspeaker. Although in one embodiment Tsukagoshi mentions the use of a pair of dies, Tsukagoshi does not appear to describe a method as in claim 4 of decorating a surface of either or both of such dies. That is, the embodiment of Fig. 5 of Tsukagoshi illustrates a pair of dies 31, 32. However, the description of such Fig. 5 embodiment (which appears to be from line 32 of column 5 to line 6 of column 6 of Tsukagoshi) does not appear to disclose the coating, molding, sticking and causing steps recited in claim 4. As such, it is respectfully submitted that Tsukagoshi does not appear to disclose a method for decorating a surface of a die

which includes the coating, molding, sticking and causing steps recited in claim 4.

Additionally, it is respectfully submitted that claim 4 is distinguishable from a combination of Akins and Tsukagoshi. More specifically and as previously indicated, Akins appears to be directed to a method for fabricating a reusable photomask which may be used in making a radome or a three-dimensional printed circuit board. Such photomask may be placed upon a three-dimensional substrate (such as substrate 20) which may be covered with a photoresist material (such as photoresist material 23). After the image is formed, the photomask is removed. Thereafter, the substrate appears to be subjected to chemical processing so as to produce the desired product. (See, for example, line 47 of column 4 to line 7 of column 5 of Akins.) If such photomask and the use thereof were applied to Tsukagoshi, it is respectfully submitted that it would not produce the method of claim 4. As an example, the embodiment of Fig. 5 of Tsukagoshi appears to disclose a substrate 7 with coating layers 6 (which is placed inside dies 31, 32). (See, for example, lines 32-39 of column 5 of Tsukagoshi.) If the photomask of Akins were to be applied to the substrate 20 in a manner such as that previously described, the produced item would not be a die which may be usable a plurality of times to form a plurality of objects. Instead, the item produced from such combination of Akins and Tsukagoshi may be the final desired item (such as a diaphragm of a speaker).

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the 103 rejection of claim 4 be withdrawn. For similar or somewhat similar reasons, it is also respectfully requested that the 103 rejection of independent claim 11 be withdrawn.

Claims 2, 5, 9, and 10 are dependent from independent claim 4. Accordingly, it is also respectfully requested that the 103 rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been overcome, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone applicants' attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections and/or rejections which the Examiner might have.

If there are any charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

Dennis M. Smid, Esq.

Registration No.: 34,930

LERNER, DAVID, LITTENBERG,

KRUMHOLZ & MENTLIK, LLP

600 South Avenue West

Westfield, New Jersey 07090

(908) 654-5000

Attorney for Applicants